



CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Review of School Admission Arrangements
for Academic year 2020/21

Consultation period:

18th January 2019 to 1st March 2019

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1. Introduction

This consultation document is an opportunity for consultees and other interested parties to learn about some proposed changes to the school admission arrangements for secondary and community schools within the County of Monmouthshire. We proposed to implement the changes to existing arrangements in readiness for the 2020/21 academic year.

The consultation provides you with an opportunity to ask questions, make comments, and share your views on the proposals put forward. Your input into this consultation will be considered carefully when the Council considers whether the proposals should be taken forward to implementation.

Please note that the information contained within this document should be considered in conjunction with the draft school admission policy 2020/21, which is available to view / download at

www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/applying-for-a-school-place

2. Your views matter

Your views on the proposed changes to the school admission arrangements are important to us. We really do want you to engage in this consultation and tell us what you think of the proposals, particularly if they may affect you or your children.

Important: This consultation will not make any assumptions, so whether you are for or against the proposed changes, please take this opportunity to have your say

You can tell us what you think by:

- 1) Attending one of the consultation sessions:

Review Area	Date	Venue
Caldicot Cluster	7 th February 2019 at 6pm	Durand Primary School
Chepstow Cluster	14 th February 2019 at 6pm	Chepstow School
Abergavenny Cluster	11 th February 2019 at 6pm	Cantref Primary School
Monmouth Cluster	21 st February 2019 at 6pm	Overmonnow Primary School
All areas day time drop in session	6 th February 2019 9.30am to 11.30am	Innovation House, Magor
	22 nd February 2019 9.30am to 11.30am	County Hall, Usk

- 2) To enable us to carry out detailed analysis of the feedback provided we would urge you to complete the consultation questionnaire, which is available on our website at www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/admissionconsultation

If you have any questions on the proposals please contact the Access Unit on 01633 644508 or by emailing acesstolearning@monmouthshire.gov.uk.

Please note that the deadline for responses to this consultation is 1st March 2019 at 5pm. Any responses received by the local authority after this closing date will not be considered as part of this consultation.

3. Consultation requirements

The School Admissions Code Wales (July 2013), Local Authorities must consult annually on the admission arrangements for those schools for which it is the admissions authority. Where changes to existing arrangements are proposed, including school catchment areas, consultation must be undertaken with those likely to be affected by the proposals.

The Council is required to undertake this consultation by 1st March 2019 and determine the outcome of the proposals by 15th April 2019 should it wish to implement the proposals for September 2020 onwards.

4. Consultation with children and young people

The views of children and young people are extremely important to the Council and therefore children and young people will be provided with opportunities to contribute to this consultation process. The Council will engage with children and young people considered to be affected by these proposals and ensure that their views are captured and considered in any reports that determine our way forward.

5. Consultation arrangements - Key Dates

Consultation stage	
Task	Key Dates
Consultation commences	18 th January 2019
Consultation ends (6 weeks)	1 st March 2019

Consideration stage	
Task	Key Dates
Consultation report published by	27 th March 2019
Cabinet consider results of consultation and agree on how to proceed	3 rd April 2019

Implementation stage
September 2020

6. How will your views be considered

The Council will develop a consultation report incorporating all of the responses received from consultees by the consultation closing date. The consultation report will be made available for all consultees to view.

It is this consultation report that will be considered by the County Council's Cabinet informing a decision on whether any of the proposals should be implemented. Therefore, if you have a view, whether you support the proposals or not, please share them with us prior to the closing date.

7. Explanation of terms used in this document

Term	Explanation
Admission Authority	The body responsible for setting and applying the admission arrangements for the school concerned. The Council is responsible for the admission arrangements for Community Schools within the County
Community Schools	A maintained Nursery, Primary or Secondary School setting for which the Local Authority has staffing, premises and admissions responsibility
Oversubscription criteria	A list of criteria used to determine which applicants are to be awarded school places in the event that there are more application requests for a school than there are places available
Academic year	The period of the year in which children and young people start / attend school. The Academic year runs from the beginning of September through to 31 st August in the following calendar year
Published Admission Number (PAN)	The maximum number of children that the Council will admit into each year group in a school. This number reflects the total capacity of the school
Feeder School	One of a group of primary schools that work in close partnership with a local secondary school, often sharing educational arrangements in readiness for transition between schools

8. The role of Monmouthshire County Council as an admissions authority

An admission authority is a body responsible for setting and applying a school's admission arrangements. Local Authorities in most instances are the admission authorities for community and voluntary controlled schools. Governing bodies are the admission authorities for voluntary aided and foundation schools.

The County of Monmouthshire is comprised of 30 Primary Schools, 4 Secondary schools and a special school. A full list of Monmouthshire schools can be found under appendix 1

In Monmouthshire, the Council is the admission authority for 31 of the 35 schools within the county. The individual governing bodies are the admission authorities for:

Archbishop Rowan Williams VA Church in Wales Primary
Magor VA Church in Wales Primary
Our Lady and St Michaels RC Primary
St Marys RC Primary

The Council is the admission authority for all other nursery, primary and secondary schools within the county.

In line with the School Admissions code of practice (2013), parents must complete an application form in order to obtain a nursery / school place. Parents / carers will have the opportunity to complete an application online or alternatively via a paper application.

All parents are invited to express a preference on a common application form, regardless of the status of the schools for which they wish to apply and whether the school is in/out of county. The Council has a responsibility to consider all preferences equally and comply with the preference wherever possible. All applications must be determined in line with the outcome of the application in line with its agreed school admissions policy.

In the event that the number of application requests exceeds the number of available places, the agreed oversubscription criteria is used to award the available school places. Any applicant unsuccessful in obtaining a place at the preferred school will receive a statutory right to appeal against the decision to an independent appeal panel.

9. Background to the review of the school admissions policy

The adopted oversubscription criteria that forms part of the school admissions policy has been in place for many years. The Council has previously been challenged on the fairness of the current oversubscription criteria and how school places are awarded.

A review of oversubscription criteria was last undertaken in 2015, where the Council entered into a formal consultation seeking views on a proposal to amend the order of the oversubscription criteria. A particular focus was placed on the positioning of those residing within the catchment area for the preferred school against those with relevant siblings. However, the significance of the proposed changes led to a Cabinet decision to re-engage in a more intensive consultation with the Monmouthshire community prior to implementing any changes.

In February 2018, the Council adopted a new corporate plan that sets out the 22 priorities to be completed by 2022. A review of the school admissions policy has been identified within the corporate plan as one of the priorities to be revisited.

10. What areas of the policy are we looking to review?

The Council is seeking to engage with consultees specifically on the oversubscription criteria e.g. the criteria used to determine which applicants are to be awarded places in the event that there are more application requests for a preferred school than there are places available.

11. Oversubscription Criteria - the Status Quo

The Council consults on its admission policy on an annual basis. The adopted oversubscription criteria in its current form for community and voluntary controlled schools in Monmouthshire is:

Children and Young People in receipt of a statement of Special Educational Needs (Statutory requirement for admission)
1. Looked After Children or previously Looked After Children. i.e. children who are in the care - or have previously been in the care of the Local Authority
2. Children with exceptional medical circumstances
3. Children with relevant siblings who are in attendance at the preferred School
4. Children residing within the preferred school's catchment area
5. Children residing outside of the catchment area
6. After applying the categories above, or should the school continue to be in a position of over-subscription in any of the above categories, priority will be based on closeness to the preferred school, measured using the shortest safe walking route.

Please refer to the full admission policy 2020/21 available via www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/applying-for-a-school-place for a full description of how children and young people qualify under each criteria above.

12. Proposed changes to the oversubscription criteria

The Council are consulting with you on the oversubscription criteria. This is a criteria used to award places in the event that there are more application requests for a preferred school than there are places available.

In particular, the Council are considering three key changes to the existing criteria

Proposal 1 - Introduce a new criteria into the oversubscription criteria for secondary schools that affords a priority for children on roll at a designated Primary feeder school.

Proposal 2 - Affording priority to children and young people resident in the designated catchment area for the preferred school over those residing outside of the catchment area but with relevant siblings.

Important: The Council proposes that priority will continue to be afforded to out of catchment children with existing sibling links for a period of five years from the date of implementation of this policy (September 2020), over those children in catchment but without relevant sibling links. This criteria would be relevant for existing siblings only, placed on roll at the preferred school by September 2019, with younger siblings eligible to start Primary School (Reception) / transfer from Primary to Secondary school those children eligible to start Primary School / transfer to secondary school in September 2020, September 2021, September 2022, September 2023, and September 2024.

13. Proposed oversubscription criteria - Primary Schools

The Council would like to hear your views on the implementation of the below oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled primary schools in Monmouthshire:

Priority rank	Criteria
<i>Children in receipt of a Statement of special educational needs (statutory requirement for admission)</i>	
1.	Looked after children or previously looked after children i.e. children that are in the care of or have previously been in the care of a local authority.
2.	Children with exceptional medical circumstances
3.	Children residing within the catchment area for the preferred school who have relevant siblings
4.	Children residing outside of the catchment area for the preferred school, but with relevant siblings who will continue to be in attendance at the preferred school due to being unsuccessful in their application for a place at their catchment school.
5.	Children residing outside of the catchment area, but with relevant existing siblings enrolled at the preferred school by September 2019. ***Please see explanatory note below
6.	Children residing inside the catchment area for the preferred school
7.	Children residing outside of the catchment area for the preferred school, with a relevant sibling (who will be in attendance at the preferred school at time of admission) that does not meet criteria points 4 and 5 above
8.	After applying the categories above, or should the school continue to be in a position of over-subscription in any of the above categories, priority will be based on

	closeness to the preferred school, measured using the shortest safe walking route.
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*** This criteria would be relevant for existing siblings only, placed on roll at the preferred school by September 2019, with younger siblings eligible to start Primary School (Reception) in September 2020, September 2021, September 2022, September 2023, and September 2024.

Please refer to the full draft school admissions policy 2020/21 at www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/applying-for-a-school-place for details on how children qualify for each of the above criteria.

14. Proposed oversubscription criteria - Secondary Schools

The Council would like to hear your views on the implementation of the below oversubscription criteria for community secondary schools in Monmouthshire:

Priority rank	Criteria
<i>Children in receipt of a Statement of special educational needs (statutory requirement for admission)</i>	
1.	Looked after children or previously looked after children i.e. children that are in the care of or have previously been in the care of a local authority.
2.	Children with exceptional medical circumstances
3.	Children residing within the catchment area for the preferred school who have relevant siblings
4.	Children residing outside of the catchment area for the preferred school, but with relevant siblings who will continue to be in attendance at the preferred school due to being unsuccessful in their application for a place at their catchment school.
5.	Children residing outside of the catchment area, but with relevant older siblings enrolled at the preferred school by September 2019. ***Please see explanatory note below
6.	Children residing inside the catchment area for the preferred school
7.	Children residing outside of the catchment area for the preferred school, with a relevant sibling (who will be in attendance at the preferred school at the time of admission) and does not meet criteria points 4 and 5 above

8.	Children currently on roll at a primary school that is designated to be a feeder school for the preferred secondary school
9.	After applying the categories above, or should the school continue to be in a position of over-subscription in any of the above categories, priority will be based on closeness to the preferred school, measured using the shortest safe walking route.

*** This criteria would be relevant for existing siblings only, placed on roll at the preferred school by September 2019, with younger siblings eligible to transfer from primary to secondary school in September 2020, September 2021, September 2022, September 2023, and September 2024.

Please refer to the full draft school admissions policy 2020/21 at www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/applying-for-a-school-place for details on how children qualify for each of the above criteria.

15. Background to proposed changes

Proposal 1 - Introduce a new criteria into the oversubscription criteria for secondary schools that affords a priority for children on roll at a designated Primary feeder school.

The oversubscription criteria in its current form does not currently afford priority to children in attendance at a primary school considered as a feeder for the preferred secondary school.

Parents are invited to express a preference for a school for their child to attend. As a result, primary schools within the county often have children and young people on their roll that do not form part of their catchment area / the catchment area for the feeding secondary school.

Following the application of the priority criteria for children living within the catchment area for the preferred school, allocations are made based on the distance calculated from the home address to the preferred school. During times of oversubscription, some children in attendance at a feeder primary school are often unsuccessful in obtaining places at the feeding secondary school, resulting in them being unable to transition to secondary school alongside their peers.

The Council proposes the introduction of the feeder school criteria to respect the collaborative and transitional arrangements that exist between Monmouthshire primary and secondary schools, and increase the support for peer groups to remain together in their journey to secondary school.

Proposal 2 - Afford priority to children and young people resident in the designated catchment area for the preferred school over those residing outside of the catchment area but with relevant siblings.

The oversubscription criteria in its current form affords a priority to children with relevant siblings attending the preferred school, regardless of whether or not they reside within the catchment area for the preferred school.

Parents have the opportunity to express a preference to the primary school in which they wish their child to attend – this does not need to be the designated catchment school. In the event that their application is successful, the current oversubscription criteria offers a high priority to their siblings who follow into primary school in future years.

Whilst the Council recognises the importance of siblings being able to attend the same school, the current position results in many in catchment children being displaced and transported to primary schools outside of their community.

The Council is seeking your views on whether children residing within the catchment area for a preferred school should be afforded priority over those residing out of catchment but with relevant siblings.

16. Advantages and disadvantages of the proposals

Proposal 1 - Introduce a new criteria into the oversubscription criteria for secondary schools that affords a priority for children on roll at a designated Primary feeder school.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Children and young people that are attending a feeder school will have an increased opportunity of accessing school places at the feeding secondary school	Children and young people that are residing outside of the catchment area for the preferred school will have an increased risk of not obtaining a school place at the preferred school if they are not in attendance at a designated feeder primary school
The proposal will increase the opportunity of children and young people transitioning to the same secondary school alongside their peers.	
The proposal recognises the transitional arrangements between primary and secondary schools, and the associated educational benefits	

Proposal 2 - Afford priority to children and young people resident in the designated catchment area for the preferred school over those residing outside of the catchment area but with relevant siblings

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>The proposals would increase the opportunities for children and young people residing within the preferred schools' designated catchment area to secure places at their designated catchment school(s).</p>	<p>The longer-term impact of this proposal could increase the risk of children and young people being unable to attend the same school as their sibling.</p> <p>Important – the above would at large relate to siblings enrolled at the preferred school after September 2019. Parents would be aware of the risks at point of application that applying for a school(s) outside of the catchment area could bring to younger siblings.</p>
<p>The proposals are supportive of children and young people having increased opportunities of attending a school within their community.</p>	
<p>Because of the above, there would be a reduction in the number of children and young people being transported to schools outside of their community.</p>	
<p>The majority of children and young people with existing sibling links would continue to receive a priority to attend the same school as their sibling(s). N.B. the existing sibling would need to be on roll at the preferred school by September 2019.</p>	

Appendix 1 - List of Schools in Monmouthshire

Primary Schools

CLUSTER	SCHOOL
Caldicot	Archbishop Rowan Williams CIW Primary
Caldicot	Castle Park Primary
Abergavenny	Cantref Primary
Monmouth	Cross Ash Primary
Abergavenny	Deri View Primary
Caldicot	Dewstow Primary
Caldicot	Durand Primary
Abergavenny	Gilwern Primary
Abergavenny	Goytre Fawr Primary
Monmouth	Kymin View Primary
Monmouth	Llandogo Primary
Abergavenny	Llanfoist Fawr Primary
Abergavenny	Llantilio Pertholey CIW Primary
Abergavenny	Llanvihangel Crucorney Primary
Caldicot	Magor CIW Primary
Monmouth	Osbaston CIW School
Abergavenny	Our Lady & St Michaels RC Primary
Monmouth	Overmonnow Primary
Chepstow	Pembroke Primary
Monmouth	Raglan CIW VC Primary
Caldicot	Rogiet Primary
Chepstow	Shirenewton Primary
Chesptow	St Mary's RC Primary
Chesptow	The Dell Primary
Chepstow	Thornwell Primary
Monmouth	Trellech Primary
Caldicot	Undy Primary
Monmouth	Usk CIW Primary
Abergavenny	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni
Caldicot	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin

Secondary Schools

CLUSTER	SCHOOL
Caldicot	Caldicot School
Chepstow	Chepstow School
Abergavenny	King Henry VIII Comprehensive School
Monmouth	Monmouth Comprehensive School
Serving all 4 clusters	Mounton House Special School

Appendix 2 - List of Consultees

The governing body of the relevant schools

1. Governing bodies of All secondary schools in Monmouthshire
 - Caldicot School
 - Chepstow School
 - King Henry VIII Comprehensive School
 - Monmouth Comprehensive School
2. Governing bodies of All primary schools in Monmouthshire:

Neighboring Local Authorities affected by the proposals

- Newport City Council
- Gloucestershire County Council
- Herefordshire County Council
- Torfaen County Council
- Powys County Council

Admission Authorities for all other maintained schools in the area

- Archbishop Rowan Williams CIW Primary
- St Marys RC Primary
- Our Lady and St Michaels RC Primary
- Magor CIW Primary

Parents of Children Likely to be affected

- All parents of children and young people currently attending a Monmouthshire Primary / Secondary School

Other key parties

- Members of the School Admission Forum
- County Councillors
- Church in Wales Diocesan trust, director of Education
- Roman Catholic Diocesan trust, director of Education